

Radicals Murder History in Screenplay on JFK's Death

A new movie is underway with a single, ideological purpose: to show that John F. Kennedy, instead of being killed by a Communist, which happens to be the case, was murdered by a group of right-wing fanatics both in and out of the government.

Starring Burt Lancaster, Robert Ryan and Will Geer, "Executive Action" will be released by National General Pictures to coincide with the Tenth anniversary of Kennedy's death on November 22. The movie, according to the *New York Times*, very closely follows the novel of the same name.

The story depicts a complex assassination plot designed and executed by Texas oilmen, retired right-wing military personnel, CIA agents, anti-Castro Cubans and the Mafia. In the novel, Lee Harvey Oswald—the man the Warren Commission found guilty of murdering Kennedy—is only a decoy planted to divert the four real assassins.

The *Times* claims that "all the participants" assert that "Executive Action" is an interpretation of the assassination that makes more sense than the Warren Commission probe. The authors insist that a great deal of the film can be documented and plan to distribute corroborative research material at the time of the film's release.

Those backing the production and scripting the film, however, did not exactly go into this venture with an unbiased viewpoint.

Herbert Magidson, a Los Angeles businessman active in the antiwar movement, is putting up most of the money for the film.

Aside from having received a jail sentence for illegally protesting the mining of Haiphong Harbor, Magidson was a member of the committee to defend

the "Chicago 8" and a sponsor of a national committee to free Communist Angela Davis.

Dalton Trumbo, who has been working on the script, was a Communist party member in the 1940's, serving 10 months in prison for refusing to respond to the House Committee on Un-American Activities about his Communist past, and as late as 1969 refused to respond to liberal Steve Allen's public request that he say whether or not he was still a Communist.

Don Freed, a co-author of the original novel who is also working on the script, is considered a key New Left leader in the Los Angeles area. He has been

an active leader in an organization called "Friends of the Panthers" and was one of the initial sponsors of a committee to free Angela Davis.

Freed and the wife of Don Sutherland—Sutherland sold the screenplay rights to Magidson—were arrested in October 1969 on charges of transporting explosives. At the time of his arrest, he was accused of carrying 10 hand grenades. The indictments against both Freed and Mrs. Sutherland were later dismissed.

Mark Lane, the radical activist lawyer, is also working on the play. Lane, who has changed his story several times, is a chief purveyor of the notion that rightwing conspirators—not Oswald—did in President Kennedy.

He's even hinted that LBJ may have had a role in Kennedy's death. A strong supporter of Communist Angela Davis, Lane has also been a backer of left-wing causes promoted by Jane Fonda and the American Indian Movement.